

Radnor, PA — Joined by Congressman Dale Kildee, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education, Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) today gave local education leaders a chance to share their concerns with the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law during a Congressional Field Hearing in Radnor.

Held in the Radnor High School Auditorium, the field hearing sought to provide Congressional leaders with information on how No Child Left Behind is affecting local schools. Students, teachers, superintendents, and representatives from unions and chambers of commerce were invited to share their concerns, as well, on the law and its effect on workforce preparedness.

“This is the third education focused event I have held in the seventh district since taking office,” said Rep. Sestak. “No Child Left Behind could be reauthorized as early as June. I need to hear directly from educators about how the federal No Child Left Behind law is affecting our local schools – for better or for worse – so that I can advocate for the best possible reforms to the law as a member of the Education and Labor Committee. I will take the concerns I heard today and include them in the amendments I plan to introduce on No Child Left Behind.”

Penn Delco School District Superintendent Dr. Leslye Abrutyn, Norristown Area High School Principal Joseph Howell, Radnor High School Vice Principal Anthony Stevenson, and University of Pennsylvania Professor Theodore Hershberg were invited to testify in the hearing and address three key questions regarding the No Child Left Behind law, particularly:

- Does NCLB adequately measure individual student achievement and learning?
- Should schools not meeting NCLB standards all receive the same penalties and types of intervention?
- Does NCLB do enough to ensure that all children attend school in a safe learning environment?

“Our public schools are supposed to open up doors for all of our children,” said Rep. Sestak. “The beauty of public education in America is that any student can walk through the schoolhouse doors on the first day of school and head down a path that can lead him or her practically anywhere. We need to reform No Child Left Behind so that it is empowering students on whichever path they choose and preparing them to work in a knowledge-based economy.”

In Congress, Congressman Sestak is a member of the Education and Labor Committee, where he has advocated for a high quality education for all students.

Earlier this spring, Congressman Sestak held an Education Summit, with Education and Labor Committee Chairman George Miller, which brought together over 300 educators, parents, students, administrators, and policy makers to discuss education issues surrounding Early Childhood, special education, and Elementary and Secondary Education.

During the summit's panel discussion on early childhood education, Congressman Sestak's panelists and guests discussed the need to address issues pertaining to Head Start, including continued support of parental involvement in local Head Start policy councils and extending eligibility of Head Start for families up to 130 percent of the poverty level. A resounding concern by both early childhood experts and educators was regarding the need to provide and retain high quality Head Start teachers, who serve our country's most disadvantaged, low-income children.

As a result of this discussion, Congressman Sestak worked with Chairman Miller to incorporate parental involvement in local Head Start policy councils and to extend the eligibility of Head Start families into H.R. 1429, the Improving Head Start Act. Rep. Sestak also successfully passed an amendment he introduced to the bill which will provide up to \$10,000 in loan forgiveness for Head Start teachers.

The second education summit explored the challenges facing our Higher Education system and Advanced Training programs and included Congressman Rubén Hinojosa, the Chairman of the US House Subcommittee on Higher Education, Lifelong Learning and Competitiveness as a guest panelist.

Congressman Sestak has also signed on as a major sponsor of H.R. 627, the Keep our PACT Act, which would fully-fund No Child Left Behind and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act by 2014.

The feedback gathered regarding the role of education in workforce preparedness and economic growth in the district during Rep. Sestak's first two education summits led him to also begin holding economic summits. He will hold his second economic development summit on May 21st at Delaware County Community College.

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "DeepBlue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on

Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives.

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